

(Draft – Awaiting Formal Approval)

**MINUTES OF THE
TRANSPORTATION INTERIM COMMITTEE**

Wednesday, October 16, 2013 – 10:30 a.m. – Room 210 Senate Building

Members Present:

Sen. Kevin T. Van Tassell, Senate Chair
Rep. Johnny Anderson, House Chair
Sen. Wayne A. Harper
Sen. Karen Mayne
Sen. Evan J. Vickers
Rep. Jacob L. Anderegg
Rep. Kay J. Christofferson
Rep. Spencer J. Cox
Rep. Janice M. Fisher
Rep. Gage Froerer
Rep. Don L. Ipson

Rep. John Knotwell
Rep. David E. Lifferth
Rep. Daniel McCay
Rep. Carol Spackman Moss

Members Absent:

Sen. J. Stuart Adams

Staff Present:

Mr. Arthur L. Hunsaker, Policy Analyst
Ms. Shannon C. Halverson, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Tracey Fredman, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

Chair Anderson called the meeting to order at 10:33 a.m.

MOTION: Sen. Van Tassell moved to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2013, meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Sen. Mayne, Rep. Cox, Rep. McCay, and Rep. Moss were absent for the vote.

2. Report: State Highway System

Ms. Linda Hull, Director, Policy and Legislative Services, Utah Department of Transportation, distributed "Annual Report to the Transportation Interim Committee" and indicated that the Utah Department of Transportation has only one highway transfer to report, which is SR-244 (Main Street) in Helper. She stated that the Utah Transportation Commission has approved the transfer.

3. Recommendations: Improving Condition of Local Government Roads

Mayor Jerry Rechtenbach, Taylorsville, distributed and presented "Local-Option Transportation Funding." He discussed the need for additional transportation funding at the city and county levels and how those funding needs are determined for the maintenance and continued operation of roads throughout the state.

Commissioner Larry Ellertson, Utah County, proposed and discussed a 3% local-option fuel user fee to meet the need for additional transportation funding for maintenance of city and county roads. Commissioner Ellertson asked that the Legislature support this proposal.

Committee discussion followed. Rep. Ipson asked if there was a provision in the proposal to accommodate the international fuel tax agreement, which allows international vehicles to traverse the state.

Mr. Lincoln Shurtz, Director, Legislative Affairs, Utah League of Cities and Towns, reported that the League of Cities and Towns and the Utah State Tax Commission are working together to find solutions to the concerns raised by the proposal.

Mr. Lane Beattie, President and Chief Executive Officer, Salt Lake Chamber, spoke in support of the funding proposal presented by Commissioner Ellertson. Mr. Beattie also stated that the Utah Transportation Coalition, the Salt Lake Chamber, and other key stakeholders are developing a five-year funding plan, which they hope will provide for future economic growth and bolster previous investments in transportation.

4. Bonding for Transportation

Mr. Mark Bleazard, Fiscal Manager, Transportation and Capital Facilities, Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst, distributed and reviewed "State Debt Obligations."

Mr. Richard Ellis, Utah State Treasurer, presented "The State's Debt Profile & Credit Rating Considerations."

Mr. Bleazard and Mr. Ellis answered questions from committee members during the discussion.

5. DUI Annual Report

Ms. Mary Lou Emerson, Director, Utah Substance Abuse Advisory Council, Utah Commission on Criminal and Juvenile Justice, distributed and gave an overview of "2013 Preliminary Eleventh Annual DUI Report to the Utah Legislature."

Mr. Art Brown, President, Mothers Against Drunk Driving, responded to committee members' questions about how Utah compares to other states with respect to DUI arrests and deaths.

6. Reducing Current Legal Blood Alcohol Level

Mr. James C. Fell, Senior Research Scientist, Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, distributed and presented "The Rationale for Lowering the Illegal BAC Limit for Driving to .05." Mr. Fell provided statistics that document the severity of the problem impaired driving causes in the United States. He discussed blood alcohol content levels (BAC), crash risk at different BAC levels, and the effects that lowering the illegal BAC limit to .05 would have on Utah's roads. Mr. Fell concluded that .05 is a level at which critical driving skills are impaired, and above that level the risk of a crash is significantly increased.

7. Driver License Suspension Periods

This item was not discussed.

8. Draft Bill "Driver License Amendments"

Rep. Stephen G. Handy referred committee members to draft legislation "Driver License Amendments" (2014FL-0259/003), which was distributed in the mailing packet. Rep. Handy indicated that the legislation "provides that a person who is 17 years of age or younger is eligible for a driver license certificate if the person has held an equivalent learner permit issued by another state or branch of the United States Armed Forces for six months."

Ms. Nannette Rolfe, Director, Division of Driver License, discussed the background of the proposed change in statute and responded to questions from committee members.

MOTION: Rep. Lifferth moved to recommend draft legislation "Driver License Amendments" as a committee bill. The motion passed unanimously. Rep. Froerer and Rep. Ipson were absent for the vote.

9. Transit Funding

Rep. Joel Briscoe spoke briefly on increasing the caps on one of six separate sales taxes available to municipalities and counties for funding mass transit. He indicated that he was not prepared to discuss specifics, but only wanted to present the concept for later consideration.

Mr. Dave Kallas, Senior Advisor to the General Manager, Utah Transit Authority, discussed briefly a proposed new transit pass program designed to address air quality concerns. He stated that the program would be similar to the program currently offered to universities or large employers that receive discounted rates for bulk purchases. The passes would be made available to residents at a cost of \$30 per month and would provide access to all transit services available through the Utah Transit Authority.

10. Transportation Solutions to Air Quality Concerns

This item was not discussed because Sen. Weiler was not available.

11. Committee Business /Adjourn

MOTION: Rep. Anderegg moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Sen. Harper, Sen. Vickers, Rep. Froerer, and Rep. Ipson were absent for the vote.

Chair Anderson adjourned the meeting at 12:32 p.m.